

FS Direct



Direct Communication to Foreign Service Employees and Family Members

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Click Your Way to FLO Resources

FLO Homepage on the Intranet

<http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/flo/index.html>

FLO Homepage on the Internet

<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo>

Email FLO – flo@state.gov



EMPLOYMENT

[The Network](#) - the FLO webpage, updated monthly, provides job opportunities and listings in the Washington, DC area.



INFORMATION & RESOURCES

FLO Publications on the Internet may be found at

<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/>



FS FAMILY MEMBERS

Job Seekers Network Group supports the DC area job seeker.

Calendar- <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/37848.pdf>



FS DIRECT SUBSCRIPTIONS

To subscribe, please use the following links:

Internet: <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c9156.htm>

Intranet: <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/FLO/FLOSubscription.html>

Via AAFSW: Visit the FLO area of the AAFSW web site at <http://www.aafsw.org> and click on FLO newsletters.

FS Direct is also available on the FLO Internet web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/c5709.htm>

Take Note -

It's that Time of Year Again!

ASSOCIATES OF THE AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE WORLDWIDE (AAFSW)

Would be happy to receive your donations for

The 45th Annual Book Fair and Art Corner, October 2005

Proceeds from the Book Fair and Art Corner are mostly used for charitable donations
and for advocacy work on behalf of our Foreign Service Community

**We would appreciate donations of host-country handicrafts
For the very popular Art Corner**

SORRY, NO MORE BOOK DONATIONS, PLEASE!

**Donated items may be sent via unclassified pouch to:
THE AAFSW Book Room
Room #B816 Main State (HST)**

**To drop-off donations, please contact Virginia Jones in the
Book Room #B816 Main State (HST), tel.(202) 223-5796.**



Diplomatic Auto Sales Donates to AFSA

During the months of May and June, any vehicle sale through Diplomatic Automobile Sales will result in a \$25.00 donation to the American Foreign Service Association. For more information contact Diplomatic Automobile Sales via email at diplosales@diplosales.com, visit their website at www.diplosales.com, or telephone them at (516) 496-1816.





E- Entrepreneur Pilot Training Program

The Family Liaison Office (FLO) is pleased to announce a new professional training and support program for spouses of Foreign Service direct-hire employees of the Foreign Affairs agencies (Department of State, Agency for International Development, the Foreign Commercial Service, and the Foreign Agriculture Service).

This new pilot program, called **e-Entrepreneur**, provides training and support in setting-up and developing a “portable” home-based virtual business. FLO has partnered with the StaffCentrix Company to provide and implement the e-Entrepreneur training program.

As a result of the enormous number of applications, two additional sessions have been added for June and July 2005, and will be held in Washington, DC. The **e-Entrepreneur** workshop and following support services are at no cost for the participants, but the candidate is responsible for her/his own travel, meal and lodging expenses.

Training dates and program

The two-and-half day program will take place in the Washington D.C. area.

May session - May 23, 24, 25 (workshop is already full)

June session - June 13, 14, 15

July session - July 18, 19, 20

Program topics

Phase I	full day	Exploring Entrepreneurship
Phase II	3:00-5:00 p.m.*	Anticipating Changes in the Household
Phase III	full day	Launching and Marketing your Business

*Attendance of the candidate's spouse is strongly recommended for this session.

Application and selection process

Applications will be accepted from interested candidates through an on-line application process. In cooperation with the Family Liaison Office, StaffCentrix professionals will review the applications and select the candidates. Applications will be accepted until the program workshops are full, or until a week before the training starts.

StaffCentrix on-line application at: <http://www.portablecareer.com/apply.htm>.

For more information or further questions about the e-Entrepreneurs program, contact the Family Liaison Office at the Department of State, telephone: (202) 647 1076, or email:

FLOAskEmployment@state.gov



Understanding Bilateral Work Agreements

REF: STATE 042853

As more family members seek employment in local economies overseas, the bilateral work agreement becomes an important element in the family members' employment search. The Director General emphasized the importance of monitoring bilaterals in his recent ALDAC to Chiefs of Mission (reftel). Attached are some frequently asked questions that we hope will help family members understand their eligibilities and responsibilities with regard to work agreements.

FAQs

Q. What does a bilateral mean for me as the spouse of a U.S. diplomat assigned overseas?

A. As the spouse of a diplomat you are accredited to the host government. By virtue of that status you can obtain work authorization identification from the host state that allows you to participate in the local workforce.

Q. What is the difference between a bilateral work agreement and a de facto work arrangement?

A. Under a bilateral agreement, diplomatic dependents, by virtue of their status, can obtain work authorization documents through the host country Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that they are free to seek employment and take whatever employment they may be offered. This is different from a de facto arrangement, in which we informally agree that if a foreign government allows one of our dependents to work, we will allow their dependents to work in the United States on a reciprocal basis. In the de facto scenario, work authorizations are only valid for the specific job for which the dependent has received an offer and invariably result in a significant delay between when the job offer is received and the dependent actually obtains authorization to being working.

Q. What are the privileges and immunities I keep hearing referred to? I understand that if I work in the local economy overseas I waive my civil and administrative immunities. What does that mean?

A. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR), signed by 177 nations, is the agreement that governs diplomatic privileges and immunities (Ps&Is) in the context of dependent employment. Our model agreement simply states that the Ps&Is of working dependents are governed by the VCDR. The VCDR provides that dependents who work are subject to (i.e., not immune from) civil and administrative jurisdiction for an action relating to their work in the local economy. Dependents retain their full criminal immunity. For a working dependent, this means there is no immunity for matters relating to/arising out of your job. There is no issue of a "waiver" because there is no immunity to waive. By the act of working, a dependent automatically loses the protection he/she otherwise had from civil and administrative jurisdiction, but ONLY for matters relating to work.

For example, like anyone else in that country without diplomatic status, a dependent can be subpoenaed to testify at a trial of a co-worker on work-related matters, charged with labor law violations, and order to restitute funds he/she is alleged to have taken. A working dependent will have to answer those legal summonses and will be accountable to local authorities. Similarly, he/she will have to pay income and social security taxes. However, even in relation to employment, a dependent cannot be charged with a crime, e.g. fraud, embezzlement, etc.

While some countries often believe that we need to negotiate Ps&Is in order to conclude a bilateral work agreement, it is our position that the VCDR is the conclusive and inclusive document in which we already decided these matters. The VCDR is considered customary international law and is applicable even to countries that are not signatories.

Q. I am a non-US citizen spouse of a FSO assigned overseas. Am I covered by the bilateral work agreement with the host country?

A. In general, bilateral employment agreements are not citizenship specific. The one exception is that citizens of the host country are subject to all laws of that country.

Q. I am a non-US citizen member of household and am joining my partner at her post of assignment. I've been told that the host government recognizes this relationship and that I can be issued an identification card accordingly. Does this mean that I will be covered by the bilateral?

A. No. The bilateral work agreement authorizes only the list of diplomatic dependents specified in the standard text, which tracks our accreditation standards and the relevant immigration law regulations. Dependents are (only) the following members of the household: spouses; unmarried dependent children under 21 years of age; unmarried dependent children under 23 years of age who are in full-time attendance as students at a post-secondary educational institution, and unmarried children who are physically or mentally disabled.

Q. I am operating a home-based business out of my USG leased (or owned) quarters. I have notified post management of this business and have been told that as long as I am not providing a service or product to host country nationals that I will not require a work permit. Is this true?

A. Yes. As long as you limit the scope of your employment to the confines of the diplomatic community and do not conduct outreach to citizens of the host country, you will not require work authorization. You are, however, required to notify post management of this enterprise in order to ensure that it is not in conflict with US foreign policy or in violation of any host country or US laws. Information on the 3 FAM regulations can be found at <http://foia.state.gov/masterdocs/03fam/03m4120.pdf>

Q. I am the spouse of a FSO. I am a British citizen and as such am eligible to be employed in the EU. If my FSO spouse is assigned to another EU country, how would this effect my coverage under an existing bilateral?

A. If you are employed to work in the EU, then you do not need to obtain employment authorization as the dependent of a diplomat. However, the rule on immunities (stated

above) applies to you with equal force, i.e. no immunity from civil or administrative jurisdiction for matters relating to employment but you retain full criminal immunity.



Functional Training

Change in the enrollment process for the Basic Consular Course

FLO and FSI have worked out a new procedure for Eligible Family Member's (EFMs) enrollment into the Basic Consular Course (PC530). There is no longer a waitlist. Prospective students must complete and submit the List of Data required for enrollment provided by FLO and must successfully complete the required English/Aptitude/Self Assessment test before they will be considered for the training. FLO then submits this documentation to FSI. If space is available during the time the EFM has indicated, FLO will be notified of this fact and the student may be enrolled. The Registrar's Office will send out a confirmation to the student by e-mail.

Under this new process more EFMs have been enrolled, but everyone does not succeed in getting into a class. The interest for this training is very high. Classes fill up quickly during the summer months when FS personnel come back for home leave or visit between posts. When an A100 class of new junior officers is inducted, the classes also fill up quickly. Junior officers are required to have this training and EFMs are enrolled on a space-available basis.



Education and Youth

Returning to Washington with Kids?

The **Foreign Service Youth Foundation** gets involved in all kinds of fun and meaningful activities, and many kids who actively participate talk about how nice it is to touch base periodically with other kids who "get it" when talking about the international life of the Foreign Service. Their activities include a blend of community service, social events, and the production of a newsletter. There are groups for elementary age children, middle school, and high school students. This is a place where everyone is welcome! For more information, go to www.fsyf.org.

FSYF is already planning some activities to help welcome you home! The **College Applications Workshop** for Foreign Service juniors and seniors will be held on Saturday, August 27. This workshop will explore the college application process from the perspective of a Foreign Service student, and is a joint project between the Family Liaison Office and the Foreign Service Youth Foundation. For more information, contact Becky Grappo at FLOASKEducation@state.gov.

The **Welcome Back picnic** will be held on Sunday, September 18. This is a family picnic to welcome families and kids of all ages to the Washington area. We hope to see many of you there! For more information, go to www.fsyf.org.



New listserv for the families of Special Needs children!

FSSpecialNeeds@yahoogroups.com is a new listserv sponsored by AAFSW that seeks to serve the interests of special needs families in the Foreign Service. Here is what they say about themselves:

"We are a diverse group with children at many levels of development. One common thread, joining us all, is that every 2, 3 or 4 years we pack up and move to a new country. The work involved in finding that follow-on assignment is exhausting. Sometimes we're successful, sometimes we aren't. Moving any family is difficult. Moving a special needs child adds a tremendous burden.

Hopefully, this group will help 'lighten the load' by offering insights into what countries may work for our children. Rather than just having a long list of available posts, you will have a tool to help narrow the search."

To join, send an email to the moderator at fsspecialneeds@yahoogroups.com.



Unaccompanied Tours: Support and Information

The Family Liaison Office recently developed the [Unaccompanied Tour webpage](http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c14521.htm) at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c14521.htm>, providing you with information to help you to make the best of what can be a difficult situation. It is also a place where you will read the stories of others who have been in a similar situation. Our hope is that this site will help you to find a sense of community within the Foreign Service family.

Taking an assignment at an unaccompanied post, or being assigned to a post that becomes unaccompanied, impacts the Foreign Service employee and family members in a number of different ways, both large and small. This can happen quickly, in the case of a post's status being changed, or after months of deliberation on the security climate at post. In either case, especially if a family is involved, the action will have a profound effect on what was "normal."

The employee will often find him or her self in a dangerous environment, unlike previous assignments. The family will have to cope with everyday issues without their spouse's participation. Children may act out their anger over the departure of one parent. Parents of the employee may present their own concerns regarding the assignment. And this is just the beginning. Returning home brings with it a different set of challenges, particularly, juggling expectations with the reality of coping with what has changed.

